



News Release

Medicine Bow-Routt National Forests &
Thunder Basin National Grassland
<http://fs.usda.gov/mbf>

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Veterans Assist With Beetle Clean-Up On Laramie Ranger District

(LARAMIE, Wyo.) Nov 19, 2012 – For the last two years the Medicine Bow National Forest has partnered with the Montana Conservation Corps to provide seasonal land conservation jobs for United States Military Veterans. The Forest Service's Rocky Mountain Region is one of three regions to host the "Veterans Green Jobs Program," which is intended to empower veterans as they transition to civilian life by leveraging their leadership experience to meet pressing conservation needs on public lands.

"Crews come to us with a very functional skill set, as well as being self-contained for camping out for a couple of weeks at a time," said Tom Florich, Medicine Bow-Routt National Forests & Thunder Basin National Grassland Recreation Staff Officer. "For our part, all we need to do is provide them with the work that is meaningful to their training and transition while being integral to accomplishing our mission."

In 2012 crews assisted the Laramie Ranger District in accomplishing several hazard tree and fuels reduction projects that are needed because of the ongoing bark beetle epidemic. Highlights include:

- Treated over 700 dead and dying trees that have become hazards in popular recreation areas such as Brooklyn Lake, Sugarloaf and Miller Lake Campgrounds, as well as Corner Mountain, North Fork and Green Rock Trails. Treatments included cutting down hazard trees, bucking trees into usable pieces for firewood or fence materials, and piling limbs/branches to prevent build-up of hazardous fuels.
- Mitigated hazardous fuel conditions on about 1.5 acres in the WyColo area near the state line. Work included cutting about 200 dead and dying trees and cleaning up existing fuels on the ground that posed a threat to the Wildland Urban Interface (WUI). Materials that are suitable for making buck/pole fences were sorted and the remaining slash was piled for prescribed burning.
- Cleaned up about 5 acres along the Forest Road 517 roadside hazard contract area to facilitate public firewood cutting and fuels reduction. Materials were sorted for buck/pole fences and firewood. Slash materials were piled for later treatment.
- Using materials that were generated from hazard tree and fuels work, approximately 200 feet of buck/pole fence was constructed at the Fox Park Work Center.

The Medicine Bow National Forest plans to continue with this program in 2013 with increased emphasis on reducing hazardous fuels in the WUI.

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